

LETTER FROM HARRSBURG.

THE EVENING TELEGRAPH SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE. HARRSBURG, February 28.

THE FREE RAILROAD BILL. The Senate has been engaged to-day in debating the Free Railroad bill, as introduced by Mr. Landon, of Bradford. A synopsis of it has already appeared in the EVENING TELEGRAPH. The bill is very closely drawn, and is designed to prevent companies organized under its provisions from perpetrating frauds on the stockholders. The bill is violently opposed by Messrs. Bigham, Lowry, and others, on the ground that if it should pass it will not meet with the approbation of the friends of a free railroad law. The individual liability clause appears to be a stumbling-block in their way. Messrs. Connell, Ridgway, McCandless, and Denavan contend that this clause is essential to protect the interests of property-holders, and the mechanics and laborers who may be employed in the construction of roads built under its provisions. The discussion was marked with much warmth and some bad feeling.

A NEW MILITARY BILL. Mr. Freeborn read in place this afternoon a bill to reorganize and provide for the better discipline of the Militia of the State of Pennsylvania. It applies only to the first Military District, and imposes a fine of four dollars per annum on each person of suitable age who does not join a military organization, the fine to be applied to the support of the new system.

All soldiers, under the provisions of this bill, are exempted from jury duty. The bill has been carefully revised by Colonel Provost and other military gentlemen of distinction, and in its main features is the same as the New York law, which it is said works so admirably. The whole militia system of the State will thus be made self-supporting. It is time that the soldiers had paid some attention to this matter, as the Legislature will adjourn in the course of the next few weeks.

RUNNING STEAM CARS IN THE CITY. Mr. Hood, from the special committee on the subject, reported a bill this afternoon to prevent, from and after the first day of November, 1867, the Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad Company from running locomotives south of Lehigh avenue in the city of Philadelphia. The committee had several sittings in Philadelphia during the past month, and the evidence was very strong against the use of steam by railroad companies in the thickly populated portions of the city.

The committee have not yet reported in reference to the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore, and Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Railroad Companies. It is presumed that those companies will so arrange matters as to meet the approval of the citizens of Philadelphia, without requiring legislative action to compel them to cease running their locomotives through the city.

PNEUMATIC TUBE COMPANY.

A party of Philadelphia gentlemen, consisting of Thomas J. Barger, William V. McGrath, Thomas Moore, Caleb Pierce, Theodore M. Apple, Robert P. King, Mahlon H. Dickinson, George W. Middleton, and Charles S. Clise, have applied to the Legislature for a charter for a Pneumatic Tube Company. They want the right to lay out and construct a pneumatic tube in the city of Philadelphia, along or under such routes and streets as may hereafter be selected from time to time, and to be empowered to purchase all necessary equipments, such as engines, cars, and all needful appendages for the conveyance of passengers, forwarding of packages, messages, baggage, &c., in or through the said tube. The capital stock of the Company is to consist of twenty thousand shares, at one hundred dollars each. The Company proposes to work some wonderful revolution in this conveyance of passengers and packages, both above and under ground.

FARMERS ON THE STREET.

An effort has been made in the Senate to get an act passed prohibiting farmers from standing on the curb within six squares on either side of the market-house, in Second street, above Callowhill. The bill was opposed by Senators Donovan and McCandless, who stated that, if passed, it would seriously injure the many storekeepers along Second street, extending from South to Poplar. This crusade against the farmers is made by those interested in the market-houses, and there is every prospect that the present bill will pass before the adjournment of the Legislature. This makes the sixth year that a bill of like character has been presented. Senators Connell, Ridgway, Boyer, and Worthington are in favor of it.

THE TOLL GATES.

It is in contemplation to introduce a bill in the Senate to abolish all toll gates within the city and county of Philadelphia. The movement will be popular with your citizens, particularly with those residing in the rural districts.

THE PHILADELPHIA CRIMINAL COURTS.

The bill making some important changes in the conduct of the Criminal Courts in Philadelphia has passed both Houses, and only awaits the signature of the Governor to become a law. The bill was printed entire in the EVENING TELEGRAPH'S Harrisburg letter of Thursday last. It compels the different Aldermen (among other things) to make their returns in all cases for high crimes to the District Attorney, within forty-eight hours after a hearing has been had.

SUNDAY TRAVEL.

This evening has been set apart for the discussion of the bill allowing the people of Philadelphia to decide for or against Sunday passenger railway travel. It is expected that Mr. Jenks (Dem.), of Clarion, will make a strong speech against the bill.

AN IMPORTANT ACT IN REGARD TO WEIGHTS.

Mr. Haines, from the Committee on Agriculture and Manufactures, has reported an act in regard to weights and measures, which will be read with interest. It provides: That, from and after the passage of this act, the standard weight of a bushel of wheat shall be sixty pounds; a bushel of rye shall be fifty-six pounds; a bushel of corn (shelled) shall be fifty-six pounds; a bushel of corn (in the ear) shall be seventy pounds; a bushel of oats shall be seventy pounds; a bushel of salt (ground) shall be sixty-two pounds; a bushel of salt (fine) shall be forty-seven pounds; a bushel of barley shall be forty-seven pounds; a bushel of peas shall be thirty-five pounds; a bushel of buckwheat shall be thirty-five pounds; a bushel of cloverseed shall be thirty-four pounds; a bushel of timothy-seed shall be thirty-five pounds; a bushel of onions shall be fifty-six pounds; a bushel of pease shall be fifty-six pounds; a bushel of wheat shall be

thirty-eight pounds; a bushel of lime (unstacked) shall be eighty pounds; a bushel of anthracite coal shall be eighty pounds; a bushel of bituminous coal shall be seventy pounds; a bushel of coke shall be seventy pounds; a bushel of potatoes shall be fifty-six pounds; a bushel of turnips shall be fifty-six pounds; a bushel of dried apples shall be twenty-five pounds. But nothing shall be construed as intended or required to prevent any person or persons from selling or buying any of the above articles, or any other articles, by weight or measure, or by the weight, measure, or by the weight or measure of parts of laws inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

EXECUTION.

George Wagner Hanged in New York for the Murder of His Wife.

NEW YORK, March 1.—George Wagner was hanged in the Tombs' prison yard at 9 o'clock this morning, for the murder of his wife. He was attended on the gallows by Father Duranquet, of the Catholic Church.

The Tribune of this morning says:—

It will be remembered that Wagner's was a most brutal crime. In the broad day, in the month of June, 1865, he seized his wife, threw her down, and kneeling on her back crushed her skull with an axe. He was convicted of murder. After his conviction his counsel obtained a writ of error, and the case was taken from court to court, till finally, in December last, the conviction was affirmed in the Court of Appeals. At the January term of the Supreme Court, General Term, Wagner was sentenced to be executed, the time appointed being to-day. Application was then made to Governor Foster for commutation of sentence. The following is the response of the Governor, which was received yesterday:—

STATE OF NEW YORK, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, ALBANY, February 27.—Dear Sir:—I have carefully read the report of the Board of Pardons and Commutations of Sentence, and in view of the sentence of George Wagner to imprisonment for life, and the fact that he is a native of this State, and has spent the greater portion of his life in this State, I have concluded to commute the sentence of the Court. Respectfully yours, JOHN A. BOGERT, Governor.

Wagner has no relations in this city. He has had, however, one really devoted friend, a man named Wells. The two were members together of a political society in Switzerland, and were long companions in this city. Wells has put forth every effort to save the life of Wagner, having, though possessed of limited means, spent nearly \$500 for him since the murder.

Wagner expresses himself as prepared to receive his fate. A French lady, his fiancée, together with the Rev. Father Duranquet, have been incessant in their efforts to minister to his spiritual welfare, and the prisoner professes to have received the consolations of religion.

Visit to the Unfortunate Man—Biographical Sketch—His Crime—His Appearance and Feelings, &c.

Friday, March 1, is the day appointed for the execution of George Wagner, condemned to death for the murder of his wife, Maria Wagner, in July, 1865. Whether the unfortunate man will be hung or not, depends upon the success of efforts that are being made by his friends to procure a commutation of his sentence to imprisonment. After conviction in the General Sessions, Wagner's case was taken to the Supreme Court, and finally to the Court of Appeals, but in each proceeding the sentence below was uniformly sustained, and on the result of the Supreme Court, the time was fixed for carrying out the sentence. The prisoner's appearance is not such as betokens a brutal disposition, though it is customary, in photoduplication, to give a more dejected and dejected physiognomy strongly marked by developments which would indicate the worst kind of depravity, as if it were the duty of the writer to stifle public sympathy, and wipe out the last lingering hope of redemption. Wagner is a native of Bavaria, and is now forty-one years of age. In 1853 he came to America, residing the first two years in Brooklyn; after that time his home was in this city, where he was employed as a court-messenger, and kept up to the moment of the unfortunate occurrence which has consigned him to a felon's cell, and perhaps to a felon's death. He has no near relations living, except a half brother and a half sister, who reside in the city of New York. At the last accounts they were still in Bavaria. The prisoner is in stature about medium height, and when he entered upon his confinement some eighteen months ago, presented an appearance of good health, and was of a cheerful disposition. His face is rather oval in shape, nose prominent, a light blue eye, brown hair, with beard and moustache of a reddish-brown color. Long imprisonment and mental suffering have reduced his countenance to a mere shadow, and given him an ashy pallor. He is dressed in the same grey coat and vest and dark pants that he wore when arrested. His voice is mild and subdued, and his general demeanor quiet and resigned. He has spent the greater portion of his present quarters in the wretched man for a month or more, and he has been in the same cell, and receives weekly visits from Father Duranquet and the Sisters of Mercy. These have instructed him in religious devotions, and provided a few books, thus affording the only means of relief to his wretched man for a month or more in these trying hours of solitude and terrible anticipation. He says that for a while his mind was much distressed; when awake he sank under gloomy forebodings, and his sleep was troubled by frightful dreams; but since he has been in the prison he feels greatly comforted, sleeps well, and is resigned to the fate that seems to await him. Of the crime which he is so soon, probably, to expiate, Wagner professes to be entirely ignorant. He does not protest innocence, but insists that if he did commit it, the act was done during a fit of temporary insanity, symptoms of which had previously manifested themselves in periods of mental abstraction, accompanied by strange vagaries in his conduct. Those who have long known him give him an excellent character. He was well liked by his shopmates, one of whom has expended \$500 of his own means in behalf of the unfortunate man. Wagner speaks highly of the treatment he has received at the hands of the prison authorities. His cell is neatly furnished, as the cells usually are, with an iron bedstead and chair. Near one corner hangs a small crucifix, before which he spends most of his time in devout exercises. At times, when conversing, his appearance is collected and his eye calm; but frequently a cloud seems suddenly to gather over his soul; his eye dilates frightfully, as expressing a frenzy of horror, and he will talk for a few moments, as if that moment he had taken leave of his last cherished hope, and given himself up to despair and melancholy. A brief visit from our reporter seemed to revive his spirits to some degree for the time being, but upon taking leave he again relapsed into his usual sadness, and his pale, attenuated figure sank back into the gloom of his cell, like a dead man retiring to his tomb. Whether Wagner be guilty and deserving of extreme punishment or not, it is not for us to decide. It is our duty to excite the most profound commiseration, and the appalling contemplation of the spectacle he is soon to present to the world, he broods over his doom, counts the days, the hours, the minutes, and almost the lessening seconds,

THE NEW COURT HOUSE.

The Building Turned Over to the City Authorities—Celebration of the Event.

The new Court House, fronting on Sixth street, was to-day turned over to the city authorities by the contractor, J. B. Colliady. By invitation, a number of the members of the Bar, and the Judges of the Court, assembled in the Court-room, and as a commencement of the dedicatory exercises Judge Brewster was called upon, and responded as follows:— "This is no time for speech making; life is very short, and speeches should not be prolonged. This is a splendid building for our Courts, and we receive our sincere thanks to the gentlemen who have had it in charge. They have been two Committees on City Property, and they have devoted a great deal of their time and attention to this work. For something like fifteen years the members of Philadelphia have talked of a new Court House, and I am sure that the building, I always try to be grateful, and I think that any Judge who is dissatisfied with these arrangements does not deserve any better. It is for the welfare and honor of the city, and I again return our sincere thanks to the Committees on City Property and the Chairmen and every member of the City Councils, and to every city officer who has aided us in the construction of these accommodations. I am sure the judges and the jurors and the witnesses will be well satisfied with the edifice."

The Tariff.

From the New York Tribune of this morning. "WASHINGTON, February 28.—Without anticipating what may be done this evening or to-morrow, I may say that it is the general impression that the Tariff bill is killed. Its friends are proved, on every vote, a large majority in either House, yet an unscrupulous minority says, 'You cannot perfect a measure which has already passed both Houses, by over two to one,' and the majority have allowed themselves to be placed where they think they have no choice but to govern. The most unfortunate absence of Mr. Justin S. Morrill at the bedside of his dying mother, and of Mr. Roscoe Conkling, in attendance as a lawyer at the late Ontario Circuit, is the primary cause of this calamity, as it left the 'Union' party in a minority. The hands of the open and true enemies of protection, who overleaped the bill with 200 or 300 amendments, apparently on purpose to secure its defeat. The master spirit of the intrigue is Mr. Samuel Hooper, of Boston, who aspires to be Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee in the next House. Should he be gratified, we may abandon all hope of protection from that Congress. Of the Republicans in the House, but 27 voted with the Copperheads against Mr. Hooper's amendment. Every rule, in order to take the Tariff bill out of Committee of the Whole, and this includes DeKalb and Stillwell, of Indiana, with Kay-Keefe, of Illinois, who have been discarded by their colleagues. Every man who was elected on a Lincoln ticket, who has gone square over to the enemy, also voted against protection, to wit, Noell, of Missouri, and Phelps, of Maryland, Indiana, and Ohio. The most unfortunate absence of Mr. Justin S. Morrill at the bedside of his dying mother, and of Mr. Roscoe Conkling, in attendance as a lawyer at the late Ontario Circuit, is the primary cause of this calamity, as it left the 'Union' party in a minority. 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